



COBB COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

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Director

Cobb County Water Program Receives Achievement Award

(Marietta, Ga. – August 10, 2006) - The Cobb County Water System has received a 2006 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for its Water Efficiency Program. The Water Efficiency Program was launched in March 2005 to assist Cobb County's customers with saving water and lowering their water bills. The program offers county residents a variety of programs and materials to help lower water consumption.

"The Water Efficiency Program was recognized for this award because of its leadership in the metro region on an idea that is both vitally important to our customers and relatively new in the southeast - the need to protect the availability of water for today's needs and future generations," said Bob Brice, director of the Cobb County Water System.

NACo's Achievement Award is a non-competitive program that recognizes counties for creative and innovative program development and implementation, efficient administrative management of county agencies and responsible government to local citizens. The awards are given in more than 20 categories. This year's winners represent 27 states and 95 countries.

"I continue to be amazed at the innovation and efficiency that counties have developed to address the new issues and problems they are facing. This year's programs did an especially good job of doing more with less" said Jacqueline Byers, NACo Director of Research.

The recognition of the Cobb County Water Efficiency Program as a NACo Achievement Award winner is consistent with Cobb County's commitment to responsible stewardship of our water resources.

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Water

■ The Cobb County Toilet Rebate Program has helped more than 4,000 homeowners since its start in November 2007. A new toilet valve rebate program for multi-family customers began in May. Online forms were developed to simplify applying for new landscape exemptions and for reporting water ban violations and incidents of water waste throughout the county. The Pick 10 Campaign was created to provide easy conservation activities each resident could adopt to save 10 gallons of water a day.

■ In an effort to be better stewards of water resources, the county spent \$140,000 to install wells for irrigation systems at Tramore, Noonday, Mud Creek and Hubert soccer complexes. These projects will provide irrigation water and protect the county's investment in the landscapes and sports fields in our system.

■ Cobb County's proactive approach to water efficiency resulted in significant water savings during the historic drought. Since severe drought was declared in September 2007, Cobb County residents have saved approximately 15 million gallons of water a day. Initiatives can be found at cobbwater.org/efficiency.htm.

■ In March, the Board of Commissioners awarded a \$305 million construction contract to provide needed long-term sewer conveyance capacity and equalization for the Sweetwater Creek and Nickajack Creek basins in western and southern Cobb County. This will allow Cobb to eliminate two major pumping stations and about 87,000 linear feet of aging sewer line and force main.



■ The South Cobb Tunnel project entails constructing a six-mile, 27-foot excavated diameter tunnel located in hard rock, with depths ranging from 150 to 400 feet.

The main tunnel will begin near the intersection of Maxham Road and Old Alabama Road, then lead to the South Cobb Water Reclamation Facility. The project also includes building a deep lift station with a capacity of 130 million gallons per day at the South Cobb Water

Reclamation Facility to pump wastewater from the tunnel to the plant for treatment. Construction began in July and is projected to be complete in summer 2014.

■ The construction of the new solids processing facility at the R.L. Sutton Water Reclamation Facility was completed in the fall. The \$56

Services

■ Cobb County took the initiative to reduce its water use in county-owned buildings by replacing older restroom fixtures with water-saving devices. Domestic water use in 67 county buildings and facilities through August was reduced 29 percent from the comparable period in 2007. This lowered water use by more than 3 million gallons and saved taxpayers almost \$25,000.

■ Operational changes at the county's jail and detention facilities produced 3.8 million gallons of water savings and more than \$28,000 in billing reduction for the same eight month period. All together, Cobb County Government reduced its water use for the first eight months by more than 7.5 million gallons, resulting in taxpayer savings of more than \$53,000.

■ Bringing Cobb to the forefront of green initiatives, the Board of Commissioners adopted an Environmental Purchasing Policy that supports products and services that are not harmful to human health, are less polluting, minimize waste, maximize the use of biobased or recycled materials, conserve energy and water and reduce the consumption or disposal of hazardous materials. The policy commits to buy environmentally-preferable

goods and services as long as they meet performance needs and are available at a reasonable and competitive cost.

■ Cobb's planned, SPLOST-funded, new Superior Court building is expected to meet criteria necessary to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification. The marginal additional building costs to achieve LEED certification are quickly recovered in operational and maintenance savings.



■ The county's commercial biodiesel program for its truck and equipment fleet has proven its effectiveness and significantly reduced emission pollutants during its first full year of operation. The county will continue to explore other alternative fuels for its vehicle fleet.

■ "Cobb Freedom" is a new Senior Services program that offers vouchers for transportation.

It is designed for seniors who live in areas that do not have paratransit, even though they are qualified for the program. More than 200 seniors are expected to participate the first year, allowing them to travel independently to their doctor, grocery store, church and other destinations using pre-approved vendors.

Cobb offering new recycling program at county parks

Cobb County is committed to environmental stewardship and is offering a new pilot recycling program as another way to keep our county clean.

Cobb Solid Waste is partnering with Keep Cobb Beautiful and Cobb Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs to promote the "Away from Home" program at county sports facilities.

This program for plastic and aluminum beverage containers is part of the state's Recycle 4 Georgia campaign.

Residents are encouraged to use the yellow and green recycling bins at five parks throughout Cobb: Wild Horse Creek, Lost Mountain Park, Al Bishop Park, Harrison Park and Terrell Mill Park. All bins were donated by Waste Management.

"People are more aware of the benefits of recycling, such as saving natural resources, saving energy and saving our environment," Gwen Baldwin, public program coordinator of Keep Cobb Beautiful, said. "Whether you bring your beverage containers from home or purchase them at the parks, this program allows you to easily recycle and help the



Offering recycling in venues where there is high traffic volume and consumption of beverages in plastic and aluminum containers offers park patrons a responsible alternative to littering or simply throwing a recyclable product away.

Cobb County also offers free recycling of household items at the Recycle Center, located at 1897 County Services Parkway, Marietta. Items accepted include office paper, junk mail, newspapers, magazines, phone books, green, brown and clear glass, type 1 and 2 plastics, aluminum and tin cans and car batteries.

Other items such as motor oil, anti-freeze, electronics, tires and scrap metal are also accepted. A minimum \$7 fee allows residents to dispose of up to 400 pounds of materials. Hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

For more information on the "Away from Home" recycling program, recycle center or other Keep Cobb Beautiful programs and services, visit kcb.cobbcountyga.gov or call 770-528-1135.

Traffic congestion relief on the way

In an ongoing effort to provide congestion relief to motorists, the Georgia Department of Transportation is installing ramp meters on the interstate system and several major state routes throughout metro Atlanta. Ramp meters, which control the flow of traffic onto the interstate, will eventually be located on I-20, I-75, I-85, I-285, I-575, U.S. 78 and State Route 400.

Ramp meters are designed to reduce peak traffic congestion by forcing vehicles to merge one at a time in a safe and orderly way. The meters are activated before the beginning of rush-hour and every four seconds there is a red and green cycle, allowing one vehicle to move onto the freeway. If too many cars back up on the ramp, automated sensors adjust the cycle to allow vehicles to merge faster. The meters will be used during peak congestion times only.

Ramp meters will be enforced like traffic signals. Motorists who fail to obey a ramp meter signal will be fined as they would for violating an intersection traffic signal.

The meters are being installed in many metro locations, including several in Cobb County. I-575 from Barrett Parkway to SR 92 will have meters activated this month. I-285 Northwest from Hollowell Parkway to U.S. 41/Cobb Parkway will have meters activated in early November and I-75 will have meters from Wade Green Road to SR 92 activated in early June 2009.

Ramp meters have been used for more than 20 years in more than 20 U.S. cities. Documented benefits include reduction in congestion on the freeway, reduction in overall interstate travel time, reduction in accidents in the merge area along freeway entrance ramps and reduction in vehicle emissions.

For a complete list of locations, visit www.dot.ga.gov.

Earn free Hawks and Thrashers tickets



Cobb County Public Libraries are participating in the fourth annual Atlanta Hawks and Atlanta Thrashers "Check-It-Out Reading Challenge" for students in grades kindergarten-12.

Designed to encourage

youth to read throughout the summer months, this year's Reading Challenge marks the first time the program is being offered statewide. The last day to register is Aug. 15.

By reading at least five books, participants can earn a free ticket to an Atlanta Hawks game and a free ticket to an Atlanta Thrashers game. Tickets are valid for 2008-2009 regular season home games.

After reading their selected books, participants can visit www.checkitoutreading.com to receive their rewards. Each student completing the program will be able to choose from among three Hawks games and three Thrashers games to use the free tickets. Additional tickets for families of the participants can also be purchased at discounted prices.

Complimentary bookmarks are available at Cobb libraries for youth registering in the program. For more information on the Reading Challenge and its regulations, log on to www.checkitoutreading.com or visit one of the 17 Cobb public libraries.

Water conservation by all residents still necessary

Sixty-one counties in north Georgia and many neighboring communities in the Southeast are experiencing a natural disaster less spectacular than a tornado or hurricane, but just as damaging.

The region is dealing with an unprecedented drought, more severe than any experienced in the past 170 years. Drought is a natural disaster unlike those most communities are familiar with. The duration is longer and unknown, the effects slower to be felt and the damage rarely visible as people move through their daily activities.

State and local governments primary goals are to balance economic, quality of life and environmental needs while fulfilling their first responsibility — the preservation of water for public health and safety.

Conservation on the part of all north Georgia residents is still necessary as we continue in this historic drought. Even though some restrictions may be lifted, the call for residents to practice aggressive water efficiency will still remain.

Small behavioral changes can save a substantial amount of water. These changes include turning off the water when you do simple things such as brushing your teeth, shaving and washing your face; washing dishes and clothes only when you have a full load and cutting your shower time in half.

The biggest water user in the home is the toilet. More than 45 percent of indoor water used is flushed down the drain every

day. In November, the Cobb Board of Commissioners approved the Toilet Rebate Program as an incentive for residents in single-family homes built prior to 1993 to retrofit hi-flow toilets with new low-flow technology. Customers are eligible to receive rebates on up to three approved toilets per home.

For more information about this, including the lists of approved toilets, and other water efficiency programs, visit cobbwater.org/efficiency.htm.

Learn to save water with workshop

Cobb County Water System is celebrating Earth Day by hosting a day of Build Your Own Rain Barrel Workshops on **Friday, April 25**, at the lab training room, 662 South Cobb Drive in Marietta.

Workshop participants will learn how to put together a rain barrel and learn the importance of using storm water to save water and preserve water quality. All participants will take their rain barrels home with them at the end of the workshop.

Workshops will be held at 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. and each is limited to 25 participants. Pre-registration is required so the appropriate number of rain barrels can be ordered. For more information, or to pre-register for the workshop, call 770-419-6244.

Cobb Trees hosts finale March 15



The current drought in Georgia has made a serious impact on planting efforts, but Cobb Trees volunteers branched out using this season to mulch and maintain established trees.

Join Cobb Trees for its last and largest mulching event for the season **Saturday,**

March 15, at Mud Creek Soccer Complex, 5600 Ernest Barrett Parkway in Powder Springs. Check-in and breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m. with mulching beginning promptly at 9 a.m. A demonstration will be given before volunteers start. To ensure adequate food and supplies, email pre-registration to keepcobbbeautiful@cobbcounty.org. For more information, call 770-528-1135 or visit kcb.cobbcountyga.gov.

Help stop child exploitation

Children who have been sexually assaulted often remain silent about the abuse. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is best known for its work in finding missing children. But in 1996, the U.S. Congress established the Exploited Child Division within NCMEC. The division serves as a resource center for the public, parents, law enforcement and others about issues surrounding the exploitation of children. For more information, visit www.ncmec.org.



District Three Commissioner Tim Lee (far right) recently presented Palmer Middle School student Kirby Carriman (center) with an award for being the Cobb County winner in the sixth annual water conservation and water quality essay contest. In his essay, Carriman recommends, "When taking a shower turn the water off while you lather. When cooking and washing dishes, only run water when necessary and when washing clothes, only wash when you have a full load."

The contest was open to sixth, seventh and eighth graders in Bartow, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Forsyth, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale and Walton Counties. Each participating school submitted its winning essay for the county competition, and one overall district winner was selected among the county winners. County winners received a \$25 check along with a Clean Water Campaign / Water Use It Wisely certificate presented by an elected official from their county.

Chipping away at the problem

Staff Reports

Kee Cobb Beautiful is inviting everyone to "Bring One for the Chipper," and recycle your Christmas tree after the holidays.

As a part of a statewide effort to reuse Christmas trees, Keep Cobb Beautiful is hosting more than 13 convenient sites at which area residents can drop off their trees 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.,

Saturday, Jan. 5.

Keep Marietta Beautiful, Keep Smyrna Beautiful and other affiliates will also sponsor Christmas tree recycling. In appreciation of your recycling efforts, participants will receive a seedling while supplies last.

Most sites will be manned by various volunteer

organizations from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. No other items will be allowed to be dropped off at sites.

Cobb County Parks sites will accept trees from **Dec. 26** until **Jan. 5**. All Home Depot sites, and the Cobb County Vegetative Waste location will accept trees **ONLY** on Saturday, **Jan. 5**.

To find a site location near you, or to volunteer at a site location look on the Web site at kcb.cobbcountyga.gov and go to the volunteer section for more information. You may also call Keep Cobb Beautiful at 770-528-1135.

"Bring One For the Chipper" is sponsored state-wide by the Department of Community Affairs' Keep Georgia Beautiful program, Georgia Power Company, The Home Depot, The Davey Tree Company, Cobb EMC, WXIA-TV and local Keep America Beautiful affiliates.

Davey Trees, which can be reached at 770-451-7911, as well as the Cobb Parks chipper locations will have free mulch available to county residents after **Jan. 5**.

Help maintain the county's green

Keep Cobb Beautiful's Cobb Trees Program recently announced a **Dec. 15** mulching and maintenance event at the West Cobb Aquatic Center, 3675 Macland Road, Powder Springs. While the organization is not planting new trees at this time, it needs help to maintain trees it has planted in years past. Check-in and breakfast for volunteers will be at 8:30 a.m. followed by a demonstration and mulching at 9 a.m. To pre-register, e-mail us at KeepCobbBeautiful@cobbcounty.org. Pre-registration is required to ensure adequate food and supplies. For more information visit kcb.cobbcountyga.gov or call 770-528-1135.

Program takes aim at youth drinking

Cobb Safe Neighborhoods/Safe Homes is a new local project actively supporting a national campaign to reduce teens' social sources of alcohol. It offers an opportunity for neighborhoods and residents to partner in providing safer environments for youth, families and residents and to help put a stop to social hosting, defined as adults providing alcohol or allowing underage drinking to occur in private settings. There are three components to the project: neighborhood partnership agreement, safe homes agreement and information materials. Cobb Safe Neighborhood/Safe Homes materials and agreement forms are available for download at the task force's Web site. For more information on stopping teens' easy access to alcohol, practical tips on talking to kids about alcohol and what to say to friends and neighbors about serving alcohol to teens, visit CUDTF.org/safehomes.

Building our village brick by brick

Cobb County's planned Community Safety Village, which will help educate children to hazards and how to protect themselves, is looking for those who want to make a lasting contribution to the project. For tax-deductible donations ranging from \$20 to \$100, contributors can purchase engraved bricks of various sizes that will become a permanent part of the village. The bricks will feature personalized messages chosen by the contributor. Those interested should go to the Web site CobbCounty.org/SafetyVillage or call 770-528-8335.

Calendar offers window to Cobb past

Cobb Senior Services is selling the 2008 calendar "Where the Past meets the Present." This vintage black and white 13-month calendar features senior adults at various Cobb County landmarks. Calendars are \$10 each and proceeds will benefit programs and special events at neighborhood centers for seniors 60 and older in Cobb County. Online orders are available for \$12 (including shipping) at cobb seniors.org. For more information, call 770-528-5352.

Program gives ways to share a home

If you are seeking a safe, affordable home or have an extra bedroom you want to rent, Housemate Match, a United Way funded program, can help. The program has 20 years experience compassionately matching home providers and home seekers after confidential screenings and interviews. For more information, contact Lynne Dyckman at 770-578-7526 or visit the Web site atlantajcc.org/hmm.

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